

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 2 and 19. Claims 1 through 20 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1, 14 and 19 are independent claims.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during the personal interview held January 26, 2007. The present response summarizes the agreement and understandings reached and the substance of the interview. At the interview Applicant's representative proposed to amend Claim 1 by reciting that the neck portion of the pipe collar is cylindrical throughout its length so as to distinguish from the **horn-like, flared shaped** neck portion 48 of the Williams reference (see column 6, lines 20-44). Applicant's representative further proposed to amend Claim 19 by clarifying the orientation of the pipe collar so as to distinguish from the Williams device that has the **neck portion** facing the fluid inflow rather than the claimed mouth and rounded rim. Arguments were advanced that the rejection of Claim 14 as being unpatentable over Demarest in view of Williams did not establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. The Examiner indicated agreement with this contention and agreed to withdraw this rejection of Claim 14 and will reconsider the prior art. The Examiner clarified the intent of the drawing objections and agreed with Applicant's representative that the drawings were not to scale and were not intended to depict the proportions claimed, for example, in Claim 4 but, rather, relative sizes.

In the recent Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 8, 9, 12, 19, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Williams (6,253,792). Claims 4, 5, 6-7 and 10-11 were separately rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Williams ('792), taken alone, and in view of Truax (6,682,021), Clark (1,608,547), Fuhrmann (3,974,862), respectively. Claims 13-17 and 18 were separately rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Demarest (358,147) in view of Williams ('792) and further in view of Fuhrmann ('862), respectively.

Applicant will advance arguments hereinbelow to illustrate the manner in which the presently claimed invention is patentably distinguishable from the cited and applied prior art. Applicant will confine his arguments to independent Claims 1 and 19. With the withdrawal of the rejection to independent Claim 14 as stated at the interview, no discussion of the prior art used therein is warranted. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicant's device and method of use are directed to fitting the neck portion of the pipe collar into the open inlet end of a pipe. The pipe collar has a rounded entry rim that allows for more efficient flow and higher flow capacity of the pipe by reducing friction or drag forces that exist at the pipe's entrance surface. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the neck portion is cylindrical throughout its length. Claim 19, directed to the method of increasing fluid handling capacity of a pipe, has been amended to recite that the neck portion is attached to the inlet end of the pipe thereby orienting the rounded rim of the pipe collar

outwardly into the inflow of the fluid. The rounded rim serves to reduce head losses from friction at the inflow end of the pipe.

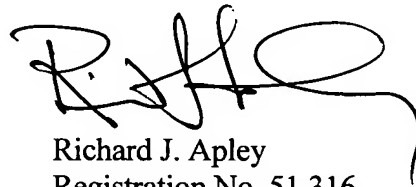
In contradistinction to Applicant's claims, the Williams device relates to end caps that are coupled to vehicle exhaust processors. Williams end cap possesses a neck portion and a rounded rim as seen in Figs. 7-14. In regard to Claim 1, the Williams end cap does not possess a neck portion that is cylindrical throughout its length. The Williams neck portion 48 is disclosed as having a flared body portion that is horn-like in shape (column 6, lines 20-44). In regard to Claim 19, Williams' end cap has a rounded rim 54 that is part of the annular portions 50, 52. However, the rounded rim is crimped so as to spring-back into its secured position within the exhaust processor; see Fig. 7 and column 7, lines 1-58. This method of insertion and its resultant structure fails to meet the language of Claim 19. In reality, it's the exact opposite orientation of Applicant's Claim 19 and therefore cannot enhance fluid flow as claimed. Neither Claim 1 nor Claim 19 is anticipated by the Williams reference; therefore, the rejections based thereon are respectfully requested to be withdrawn. The rejections of the dependent claims based upon the Williams reference, likewise, should be withdrawn.

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For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Apley', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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RJA:dht
Attachment : Petition for Extension of Time
Check in the amount of \$225.00